

STRANGE

TALES

CRYPTO



THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S TALE

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A "LIVING CORPSE"?
DEAR READER? DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE
DEAD CAN BE REVIVED? THAT THEY CAN BE
MADE TO LIVE ONCE AGAIN? THEN READ THIS
STORY. ONE OF THE BEST OF MY TERROR-
TALES THAT I KEEP HERE IN THE CRYPT! IT
IS THE STORY OF JAMES COOPER...AND HOW
HE CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD! I CALL IT...

A SHOCKING WAY TO DIE!

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MY STORY BEGINS IN A COURTROOM, SHROUDED WITH THE CROWDS WHO HAVE COME TO WATCH A CONVICTED MURDERER BE SENTENCED TO DEATH...
AND IT IS THE JUDGMENT OF THIS COURT, JAMES COOPER, THAT YOU BE SENT TO STATE PRISON, AND THERE BE ELECTROCUTED ON THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 7TH... AND MAY THE LORD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL!

NO...
NOT!



I'VE BEEN FRAMED! YOU'VE ALL AGAINST ME! BUT... I'LL GET EVEN! I'LL COME BACK... AND I'LL GET YOU! ALL OF YOU! I'LL HAVE REVENGE! YOU'LL SEE! I... LET'S GO, COOPER!



THE EVENING PAPERS CARRIED BLARING HEADLINES OF JAMES COOPER'S TRIUMPH...



BUT A FEW NIGHTS LATER, IN A RAMSHACKLED HOUSE, OUTSIDE OF TOWN...

FOR THE DEATH PRIZE, GENTLEMEN, I CAN BRING JAMES COOPER BACK FROM THE DEAD... REVIVE HIM AFTER HE HAS BEEN ELECTROCUTED!

WHAT? YOU CAN RAISE HIM LIVE AGAIN?



THAT IS CORRECT! I HAVE BEEN EXPERIMENTING ON ELECTROCUTION DEATHS FOR MANY YEARS, AND HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL WITH ANIMALS! I HAVE LONGED TO EXPERIMENT ON A HUMAN... THAT IS WHY I'VE CONTACTED YOU!



AND SO... A FEW DAYS BEFORE JAMES COOPER WAS TO DIE IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR... HE HAD A VISITOR IN THE DEATH HOUSE...



WHAT DO YOU THINK, JIMMY? WANT TO CHANGE IT?

OF COURSE, YOU FOOL! WHAT HAVE I GOT TO LOSE? PAY HIM HIS MONEY!

THE DEAL WAS MADE, AND ON THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 7TH, AT THE APPOINTED HOUR...



ALL RIGHT, COOPER! LET'S GO!

SURE, GUARD? SURE!

DOWN THE LONG CORRIDOR TO THE LITTLE GREEN DOOR, THE CONVICTED MAN... PLANNED BY THE WARDEN AND A GUARD... SLOWLY MADE HIS WAY...DOWN THE "LAST MILE."



THE HEAVY DOOR SWUNG OPEN! INSIDE, SAT REPORTERS ARRANGED TO COVER THE EXECUTION...



OUTSIDE THE DARK GREY WALLS, IN THE PRISON YARD, STOOD A BLACK HEARSE! A FACE! PEERED OUT FROM BEHIND SHOWN CURTAINS...



WHILE WITHIN, THE PRISONER WAS BEING STRAPPED INTO THE LETHAL CHAIR...



ELECTRODES WERE FASTENED INTO PLACE...

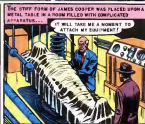


A SMALL MAN STEPPED TO A CONTROL PANEL AND PULLED A SWITCH...



THE STENCH OF BURNING FLESH AND BIRCHBARK FILLED THE ROOM AS THE LIGHTS DIMMED! AFTER A FEW MOMENTS, A DOCTOR STEPPED FORWARD AND PLACED HIS STETHOSCOPE ON JAMES COOPER'S HEART...





SLOWLY THE DRAPED FIGURE STIRRED... THEN SAT UP! THE SHEET FELL, WHAT ARE...





DON'T AID IT! NOW... I'M GONNA GET THAT JURY!



WAIT, JIMMY! DON'T DO NOTHING! FOO! COME! FORGET THE JURY! THEY JUST DO THEIR DUTY!

I SWEAR REVENGE! NOW I'M GONNA GET IT!



HE... HE'S DIFFERENT? HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ALL THERE!

MAYBE... WHAT THE PROF SAID... ABOUT HIS BRAIN BEING DAMAGED...



LATE THE NEXT NIGHT, ON A DARK STREET...

ALL RIGHT, JURY NUMBER ONE! HERE'S WHERE YOU GET YOURS!



WHO? WHO IS IT? I... NO... A... COOPER...



AND THE NEXT MORNING...



MEANWHILE, AT THE COOPER GANG'S HIDE-OUT...

IT'S THE JURY!

GOOD LORD! LOOK AT HIM!

HE LOOKS WORSE THAN YESTERDAY!

WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?

IT WAS TRUE! JAMES COOPER'S BURNED AND SEARED BODY DID LOOK WORSE! IT SEEMED TO BE... ~~POSSIBLY~~

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT, JIMMY! THEY'VE TURNED THE MEAT ON...

WHO CARES? I'LL DEF THEM EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM!



AGAIN THAT NIGHT, JAMES COOPER STALKED A VICTIM...

THAT TAKES CARE OF YOU, JUROR NUMBER TWO!



AND THE PAPERS PLAYED IT UP...

TAR NEWS

SECOND JUROR FOUND MURDERED

POLICE SEARCHING FOR A NEW KNOWN MEMBER OF COOPER GANG

COURTROOM PROMISE TO RETURN IS FULFILLED!

The Tar News newspaper is shown with headlines about the murder of Juror Number Two and the search for a new member of the Cooper gang. The text is dense and difficult to read.

THE POLICE WILLED SUSPECT AFTER SUSPECT? MEANWHILE THE OTHER JURORS WERE GIVEN POLICE PROTECTION...

RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! I'LL TALK... I'LL TALK! IT'S COOPER! HE'S ALIVE!

YOU'RE LYING!



FEAR? THEN WHY DON'T YOU LOOK IN HIS GRAVE FOR HIS BODY?

HOWAM I GET THE NECESSARY PAPERS? WE'LL TAKE THIS STODOLIE'S SUGGESTION!



BY COURT ORDER, THE GRAVE OF JAMES COOPER WAS OPENED...



IT... IT'S EMPTY? HE IS ALIVE?



IT CAN'T BE! I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IF I HADN'T SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES!



THAT NIGHT, JAMES COOPER AGAIN FOMOED THE CITY, BEING CAREFUL TO KEEP OUT OF SIGHT? HE WAS A CRAZY THING TO SEE! HIS FLESH HAD ALMOST COMPLETELY DECAYED FROM HIS BODY!

WHILE THE GOES ARE GUARDING THE JUDGE, I'LL GET THE JUDGE THAT SENTENCED ME...



HIS HORROROUS FACE PEERED INTO THE STUDY OF JUDGE WARREN HAWLEY...

GOOD! HE'S ALONE!



SLOWLY HE OPENED THE FRENCH DOORS AND ENTERED...

COOPER? GOOD LORD? WHAT? WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE...

I... I'VE COME TO... TO KILL YOU, JUDGE!



THE JUDGE SNATCHED A FORK FROM THE NEARBY FIREPLACE... AND AS COOPER ADVANCED TOWARD HIM...

KEEP AWAY, COOPER... KEEP AWAY! ALL RIGHT! YOU FORCE ME TO...

YAAAAAH!



THE BLOW FROM THE HEAVY IRON FORK CAUGHT COOPER ACROSS THE FACE, AND THE REMAINING FLESH FELL AWAY... THEN...

HE... HE COLLAPSED INTO A HEAP OF BONES... AND DECAYED AWAY!



LATER, AFTER THE CORNER HAD EXAMINED COOPER'S REMAINS...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF IT, JUDGE! YOU SAY HE TALKED AND WALKED? ACCORDING TO MY TESTS, HE'S BEEN DEAD SINCE NOVEMBER 7TH!

DEAD? BUT, HE LIVED... I SAW HIM...



YES, JUDGE! COOPER LIVED! AT LEAST HE MOVED... AND TALKED! BUT HE WAS A LIVING CORPSE! AND HIS BODY CONTINUED TO DECAY, AS ALL DEAD BODIES DO! SOON, HE HAD DECAYED TO SUCH A POINT THAT EVEN THE 'LIFE' THAT THE POOR OLD PROFESSOR HAD GIVEN HIM SLIPPED AWAY! TOO BAD, THOUGH! HE WAS GOING TO LOOK REAL PRETTY! DIDN'T YOU THINK SO? WELL... FOR MORE SPINE-TINGLING TALES...

READ ON...

IF YOU CAN'T JUST DON'T GO TO PRESS LIKE POOR OLD JIMMY!



THIS IS THE TALE OF TWO PEOPLE WHO VISITED AN AMUSEMENT PARK...AND WERE *NOT* AMUSED! I CALL IT...

TERROR RIDE!



GEORGE AND RUTH HAD BEEN DRIVING FOR HOURS WHEN THEY SAW THE SIGN...

LOOK, GEORGE!
AN AMUSEMENT
PARK! LET'S
STOP FOR A WHILE!

OH, RUTH!
WE CAN TAKE IN
SOME *ROBERT*!



THE COOL SEPTEMBER AIR STIRRED LAZILY AS THEY ENTERED THE SHADY GATES AND WALKED DOWN THE MIDWAY...

OH, DEAR! THE
ROLLER COASTER
IS CLOSED UP!

LOOKS LIKE THE WHOLE
PLACE IS BOARDED
UP WITH THE SEASONS
ONCE, YOU KNOW!



GEORGE AND RUTH STOOD ALONE
ON THE DELETED MIDWAY...



SUDDENLY

WHAT'S THAT,
RUTH?

SOUNDS LIKE
WATER
SPLASHING!



I'M GLAD AT LEAST ~~ONE~~
RIDE IS OPEN! LET'S
TRY IT!

I... I DON'T KNOW, GEORGE!
IT'S ALWAYS SO ~~DARK~~
IN THOSE THINGS...



MMMM! WHAT BETTER
PLACE TO TAKE MY
~~NEW BRIDE~~ THAN ON
A DARK BOAT RIDE!

OH, GEORGE!
STOP!

HOW
BAREY, PLEASE?



TWO? AREN'T VERY
BAREY, ARE YOU?

NO! NOT MANY PEOPLE COME
HERE THIS TIME OF YEAR!
ALL RIGHT - TAKE THE NEXT
BOAT!



COMFORTABLE,
GOREY?

SHUS AS
A BOB.

HAVE A PLEASRY!
TRIP, FOLKS!



THE BOAT WITH GEORGE AND RUTH MOVED SLOWLY TOWARD THE TANKING BLACK MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL...

THIS LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE FUN...

PLEASE, GEORGE? THE MAN WILL BEAR YOU...



AND THEN...

WOAH! IT'S DARK!

...THE DARKER THE BETTER!



YOU'RE FRESH, GEORGE, ARNOLD?

DID YOU FORGET WHO YOU JUST MARRIED TODAY, MRS. ARNOLD? NOW GIVE A...



SUDDENLY, A LIGHT FLASHED ON...

WHAT THE...?



OH, IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE WAX DISPLAYS THEY HAVE IN THESE RIDES!

BUT... IT LOOKS... SO REAL!



THE BOAT MOVED SLOWLY FORWARD, AND THE DISPLAY DARKENED AGAIN...

THOSE WAX FIGURES, WHEN THEY'RE DONE BY AN EXPERT, ALWAYS DO LOOK REAL! NOW WHERE WERE WE?

YOU WERE ABOUT TO GIVE ME A...



HOW HORRIBLE!

SAV! THIS ISN'T FUNNY ANY MORE! THESE DISPLAYS ARE... REPULSIVE!





GEORGE? I DON'T
FEEL SO GOOD!

WE'LL BE OUT **SOON**, RUTH!
I MUST SAY, THE OWNER OF
THIS PLACE HAS A **MAGNIFICENT**
SENSE OF HUMOR!



LOOK, GEORGE!
ANOTHER ONE...

DEAR? THEY CERTAINLY **DO**
LOOK REAL... THAT **DECAPITATED**
CORPSE... AND THE
DRIED BLOOD!



I'M CLOSING MY
EYES! I'M NOT
GOING TO **LOOK**
ANY MORE!

I DON'T **BLAME**
YOU! THEY'RE
ALL **PRETTY**
DISGUSTING!
WE...



WE... WE **WENT** SOMETHING!
THE **BOAT**... IT'S
STOPPED!

I'LL
SEE
WHAT
IT IS...



GEORGE MOVED TO THE FRONT OF
THE BOAT AND **CRUPED** INTO THE
WATER... **BLACKNESS**...

IT'S... SOMETHING **SOFT**...
IN THE **WATER**? I...
I'LL LIGHT MY
CIGARETTE LIGHTER...



GOOD LORD!

IT... IT'S A **BOAT!**



GEORGE... **BOB**... I WANT
TO GET... **BOB**... OUT
OF HERE...

I... CAN'T MOVE THE
BOAT! IT'S... **JAMMED** ON
THIS... **CORPSE**! WE'LL
HAVE TO **WALK** THE
REST OF THE WAY.

AS THE FRIGHTENED COUPLE
SPLASHED THROUGH THE BLACK
TUNNEL...

GREAT SCOTT! I JUST
THOUGHT OF SOME-
THING, RUTH!

BRIEF!



THAT CORPSE WAS
REAL! MAYBE THE
DISPLAYS WERE
REAL TOO!

OH, NO!
AND



ON THROUGH THE BURNY DARKNESS
THEY WAGED...

WE'LL BE
OUT SOON!

I SAID...I'M
TIRED! I'VE GOT
TO REST,
GEORGE!



HERE? HERE'S A
PLACE TO SIT
DOWN!

THANK GOODNESS!
I'M ABOUT READY
TO...



SUDDENLY, THE PLACE WHERE THEY HAVE STOPPED IS
FLOODED WITH LIGHT...

IT'S ANOTHER
DISPLAY...

IT IS REAL...BECAUSE...
IT IS REAL!



FEAR AND TERROR CLUTCHED AT THEIR HEARTS AS
GEORGE AND RUTH RUSHED FROM THE HORRIBLE
SCENE FURTHER INTO THE DRY BLOOM...

HERE? HERE'S AN
EMPTY DISPLAY!
YOU CAN REST
HERE!

IT LOOKS...LIKE
SOME KIND OF
TORTURE CHAMBER...



AS SOON AS YOU CATCH
YOUR BREATH, WE'LL
GET OUT OF HERE, RUTH!

THE OWNER...HE MUST
BE A **BRILLIANT** A
HUMANOIDAL MACHINIST...





FOO! DIDN'T LAUGH AT MY EXHIBITS...DID YOU?

GEORGE! IT'S HIM!

LOOK AT HIS EYES... HE IS MAD!



ALL SUMMER THEY LAUGHED AT MY EXHIBITS, THE FOOLS! THEY SAID MY WAX DUMMIES DIDN'T LOOK REAL! NOW I CAN SHOW THEM! HEH-HEH...

RUTH, GET READY TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT!

NO MORE WILL THEY LAUGH! NOW MY EXHIBITS LOOK REAL! BECAUSE I USE REAL PEOPLE! AND THIS IS MY LAST DISPLAY, A MEDIEVAL FORTUNE CHAMBER! THANKS TO FOO! FOO-LIKE THE OTHERS WHO WANDERED INTO THE DESERTED AMUSEMENT PARK AND FOUND THIS RIDE...

...I WILL BE ABLE TO FINISH IT! THERE'S NO USE RUNNING...YOU CAN'T GET OUT! THE EXIT IS CLOSED...AND LOCKED!



RUN, RUTH! RUN!

KAH-KAH! I'LL GET YOU... NEVER FEAR...



THERE! EASY...SHAKKLES HE'S CARRYING EASY! HE WANTS TO PUT US ON THAT JETTER! BASH!BASH!

GEORGE...HE'S COMING AFTER US...



THERE! GEORGE...THE END OF THE TUNNEL...

AND THE EXIT...IT IS LOCKED!



IT WAS THE MOST UNUSUAL FRATERNITY INITIATION EVER SEEN ON THE CAMPUS. . . OR ON ANY OTHER CAMPUS, FOR THAT MATTER! THE THREE PLEDGES WERE TAKEN OUT TO THE OLD PALMER HOME ON THAT INFAMOUS NIGHT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, AND INSTEAD OF THE PLACE BEING AMUSINGLY HAUNTED, IT TURNED INTO A—

HOUSE OF HORROR



IT WAS ON A NIGHT IN 1934 THAT THIS STRANGE TALE HAD ITS BEGINNING! TODAY, FIFTEEN YEARS LATER, THERE IS STILL NO EXPLANATION FOR WHAT HAPPENED AT THE PALMER PLACE!



GET A LOAD OF LIPS WILTON BACK THERE... SCARING THE WITS OUT OF THOSE POOR FRESHMEN!



HE'S GONE ABOUT PREPARING THIS HOUSE FOR THE INITIATION AS IF IT WERE THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 1934 GAME!

HE CLAIMS THAT EVEN IF IT WAS JUST AN OLD DUMP BEFORE... IT IS HAUNTED NOW!

AND AS THE LAST STEP IN YOUR
RADING, BOYS, YOU'LL HAVE TO
PASS THE TEST OF COURAGE!
A LONG, JOURNEY INTO THE
OLD PALMER PLACE, WHICH
LEGEND TELLS US IS
HAUNTED!



EACH ONE OF YOU WILL FOLLOW
THE INSTRUCTIONS I GAVE
ON THE RIDE OUT HERE! IF
ANYONE WANTS TO DROP
OUT NOW, LET HIM SPEAK UP
OR SHUT HIS MOUTH FOR-
EVER! EVERYONE
READY?

Y-YES, I-I GUESS
SO.



HERE'S YOUR LIGHT, HENDERSON.
YOU MIGHT AS WELL START THE
GALL ROLLING! AND REST AS-
SURED OF ONE THING, BOYS... THIS
IS NO SCHOOLBOY PRANK, AS
YOU'LL SOON LEARN!
HEH, HEH!



WAVE THAT LANTERN AT US
FROM THE FIRST AND SECOND
LANDINGS, HENDERSON! AND
JUST GOOE YOUR HEELS IN THE
ATTIC TILL I COME UP FOR YOU!
IF YOU'RE NOT ALREADY BATHED
IN GOLD SWEAT, THAT IS!



YOU'RE DRIVING THESE FRESHMEN
PRETTY HARD, LEE. YOU
MUST HAVE GIVEN THIS
PLACE QUITE A BUILD-
UP, BECAUSE THEY
LOOKED SCARED TO
DEATH! FROM THE
LOOK IN HENDERSON'S
EYE, HE'D KILL YOU
IN A MINUTE IF HE
HAD THE CHANCE!



T-THERE HE
IS NOW
WAVING THAT
LANTERN
AT THE FIRST
FLOOR WINDOW!

NOW THE FUN
STARTS! I WENT
THROUGH THAT
PLACE LAST
WEEK, RIGGED
A FEW CON-
TRAPTIONS FOR
THE BOYS TO
TRIP OVER!
DOUGHT TO BE GOOD
FOR SOME LAUGHS
BEFORE THE EVE-
NING'S OVER!



THERE HE IS AGAIN!
POOR KID MUST
HAVE RAN ALL THE
WAY UP TO THE
SECOND FLOOR! AS
IF THERE WAS A
GHOST BEHIND 'EM!





THERE MAY BE MORE THAN GHOSTS BEHIND 'EM BOYS. HEH, HEH!

ONE OF 'EM MAY HAVE GOTTEN HENDERSON THEN 'CAUSE IT'S BEEN SEVERAL MINUTES SINCE WE SAW HIM AT THE SECOND FLOOR... AND IT DOESN'T TAKE THAT LONG TO GET UP TO THE ATTIC!



JUST A BORN PRANK, THAT'S ALL! THINKS HE'LL TURN THE TABLES AND SCARE US A BIT! PROBABLY SITTING UP THERE IN THE ATTIC, WAITING TO JUMP OUT AND TELL BOB AT ME WHEN I COME UP TO RELIEVE HIM!

SO WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE CHANGE OF PLANS. TO MEET THE EMERGEN CYE INSTEAD OF LES WILTON GOING UP THERE, WE'LL PICK THE SECOND FLEDGEE! HEY, WATERS!



M-METTY-Yeah, BE RIGHT THERE!

I DON'T KNOW HOW HE DID IT, BUT WILTON'S GOT THESE FRESH-MON SHAKES IN THEIR BOOTS! NO-GUT SHOULD NORMALLY TREM BLE AT THE THOUGHT OF ASSAULTED HOUSE... UNLESS HE THOUGHT THERE WAS DIRTY WORK AFOOT!



HMM... MORE THERE IS?

HEH HEH! LOOK AT HIS FACE, WILL YOU! IMAGINE THAT... A GROWN MAN, SHAKING LIKE A TEEN-AGE GAIL GOING PAST A GRAVEYARD!



I'M GO- GIMMING TO THINK THAT I WOULDN'T LIKE THIS SET-UP MYSELF!

WHAT IN THE WORLD DID YOU DO TO THAT HOUSE, WILTON? THESE BOYS HAVE A LOOK OF ABSOLUTE SPREAD ON THEIR FACES!



AH, IT'S NOTHING! JUST A COUPLE LOOSE STEPS, A FEW CORNERS, SOME SOLIDARY DOORS.

LET'S HAPPENED AGAIN! WATERS NEVER REACHED THAT ATTIC WINDOW! I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS.



AH, THEY PROBABLY TURNED RIGHT AROUND FROM THE SECOND FLOOR... AN WE'LL FIND 'EM HIDING NEAR THE FRONT DOOR! IF THESE GUYS HAVEN'T THE GUTS TO GO UP THERE, THEN THEY'RE NOT FIT TO BE GAMMA DELTAS!

YOU ARLING. C'MON OVER HERE!
YOU'RE NEXT, MAN... GO UP TO THAT
ATTIC AND TELL THOSE PALS OF
YOURS TO STOP THEIR MONKEY-
SHINES! THIS IS A PRATERNITY
INITIATION... NOT A SCHOOLBOY
PRANK!



I-I DON'T
THINK I...
I G... GAVE
TO GO!



YOU'LL GO ALL RIGHT,
OR THE Y'LL FIND YOU
IN A DITCH! I DIDN'T
RIS UP THIS PLACE
JUST TO HAVE A
COUPLA PUNKS SPOL
OUR FUN! IF THE
THRE (OF YOU ARE
PLANNING TO GIVE
ME A SCARE, YOU'LL
REGRET IT!

W. WE DIDN'T PLAN ANY JOKES
LIKE T... THAT! AND I DON'T LIKE
THE LOOKS OF THIS... IT'S IN
NOT LIKE WATERS AND HENDER-
SON TO FOOL AROUND! B... BUT
I'LL GO!



SPOKE LIKE A
REAL GAMMA
DELTA TO BE!

HUH, HUH? LOOK AT 'EM SHAKING!
BET THE OTHER TWO'LL HAVE
A BIG SURPRISE FOR ARLING.
THINKING IT'S THEIR BELOVED
LES WILTON!

MAYBE THE
KID'S RIGHT, LES.
MAYBE SOME-
THING WAS SO
WRONG UP
THERE!



BUTS! NOTHING'S WRONG UP
THERE... ARLING'S AT THE FIRST
FLOOR SAFE AND SOUND! FROM
THE LOOK ON HIS FACE HE MUST
HAVE STUMGLED OVER THAT
SKELETON I BORROWED FROM
THE LAB, TOO!



HE'S AT THE... ON HIS WAY TO THE
SECOND... ATTIC! HOLD YOUR
BREATH, BOYS...

HERE'S WHERE THE
REAL FUN BEGINS...
IN THE NEXT SIXTY
SECONDS.



FIVE MINUTES,
WILTON... AND
NO SIGN OF
ARLING! ALL
THREE OF 'EM
GONE!

THE STUPID PUNKS... TOO YELLOW TO
TAKE THAT LAST FLIGHT OF STEPS!
I'LL SHOW 'EM REAL FEAR...



SIMPLE THAT LIGHT, JENKINS. I'LL GO UP THERE MYSELF FIRST TO PROVE TO ALL OF YOU THAT THERE'S NO DANGER UP THERE AND SECOND, TO KICK THOSE GUYS OUT OF THAT PLACE. AND OUT OF THE GAMMA DELTA!



MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LET WILTON PLAN THIS WHOLE INITIATION BY HIMSELF? HE'S LIKELY TO GO OVERBOARD ON THIS HAZING BUSINESS. THE BOYS IN THAT HOUSE MAY HAVE HUNT THEMSELVES!

FOR ALL WE KNOW HE MIGHT HAVE STUCK SOME RATTLESNAKES IN THE OLD DUMPF



W. WHAT TH...?

I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T LIKE THIS WHOLE SET-UP! THE WINDOW... IT'S BEEN SMASHED!

I... IT'S WILTON!

THOUGHT I'D INJECT A LITTLE EXCITEMENT INTO THIS INITIATION. DO I LOOK ANY THE WORSE FOR WEAR?



NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT HERE ON THE SECOND FLOOR EITHER.



FIFTEEN MINUTES SINCE WE SAW WILTON!

IS THERE *ANY* SOMETHING WRONG UP THERE?

THE SECONDS TICKED BY IN THAT LONELY AREA KNOWN AS RALLIER'S PLACE. SECONDS BECAME MINUTES... AND THE MINUTES STRETCHED INTERMINABLY.



SOMETHING'S GOING ON IN THAT HOUSE THAT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT! AND THE WAY THOSE THREE FRESHMAN HATED WILTON... THEY MAY HAVE GIVEN HIM A BAD BEATING!

I... I HOPE IT'S ONLY *TRAP*! LET'S HURRY!



WE'LL COMB THIS PLACE UNTIL WE FIND ALL FOUR OF 'EM! MINE. FRED SEARCH EACH ROOM WITH A FINE-TOOTH COMB! WE'LL SET THIS THING STRAIGHTENED OUT IF IT TAKES THE REST OF THE NIGHT!

NOT A TRACE OF ANY-ONE IN THE FRONT ROOM

OR ANY OF THE OTHERS EITHER? THE QUIET WASN'T EVEN DISTURBED!

AND OUTSIDE, NO FOOT-PRINTS! WHICH MEANS THEY'RE ALL STILL IN THE HOUSE!

NO ONE ON THE SECOND FLOOR EITHER? AND SINCE NO ONE COULD HAVE LEFT THE HOUSE... THEY MUST ALL BE UP THERE!

T. THE ATTIC?

T. THIS IS PROBABLY WILTON'S IDEA OF A JOKE. HAZING THE WHOLE BUNCH OF US? W. WELL... HERE GOES!

T. THE DOOR, IT OPENS EASILY! AS IF SOME-ONE ELSE OPENED IT BEFORE WE'D... OH!

G-G-GOOD HEAVENS!

I... IT'S WILTON! H... HE'S AGED FIFTY YEARS IN THE LAST FEW MINUTES. H... HIS HAIR... IT'S TURNED WHITE!

H... HE LOOKS AS IF HE'S GONE INSANE! LISTEN TO HIS MOANING!

NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS... NEVER EVEN HEARD OF ITS EQUAL! THAT WILTON! NO! CAN'T GET A COHERENT WORD OUT OF HIM! HIS MIND... IT'S CRACKED... HE'S COMPLETELY INSANE! AND THE OTHERS... VANISHED!

AGAIN AND AGAIN THE POLICE SEARCHED THE BUILDING THE NEXT FEW DAYS BUT NO FURTHER INFORMATION WAS UNCOVERED...

AND THEN ABOUT A WEEK AFTER THE NIGHT OF HORROR

THERE SHE GOES... CONSUMED TO FLAMES BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONER! AND WITH IT... THE LAST TRACE OF WHAT HAPPENED TO ARLING, WATERS AND HENDERSON!

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO IT HAPPENED AND NO EXPLANATION HAS EVER BEEN FOUND AS TO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE THREE FRESHMEN. OR WHAT AWFUL HORRORS LET WILTON SAW IN THE MOMENTS BEFORE HIS MIND CRUMBLLED!

WITHIN HALF-AN-HOUR THE POLICE HAD ARRIVED AT PALMER'S PLACE... AND A THOROUGH SEARCH OF THE PREMISES REVEALED ONE STARTLING FACT

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



MY STORY BEGINS ON A BLACK NIGHT IN A DESERTED CEMETERY! THE SOUND OF DIGGING SHATTERS THE DEAD SILENCE.



WELCH, THE DARK FIGURE BARGES THE SOFT EARTH, OPENING THE EVER-WIDENING BLACK HOLE...



WHAT DOES THIS STRANGE FELLOW WHO DIES AT GRAVES IN THE BLADE OF NIGHT WANT WITH BARTER'S TUXEDO, YOU ASK? LET ME TELL YOU HIS STORY WHILE HE LIVES!



HIS NAME IS LAWRENCE CABOTT WE HAVE TO GO BACK INTO THE PAST... TO LAWRENCE CABOTT'S COLLEGE DAYS... TO PICK UP HIS STORY!

HEY, CABOTT? I HEAR YOU AND JOHN BARTER ARE BOTH NOT ORIGINALLY ANDERSON!



YOU'RE GOING HAVE TO GO SOME TO GET ~~HER~~ LARRY! BARTER'S OLD MAN'S SON DOWN, YOU KNOW?

CUT IT OUT, WILL YOU, DAVE?



THAT'S JUST MY TROUBLE! I CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE HER OUT LIKE JOHN DOES!

THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS! JOHN BARTER AND LAWRENCE CABOTT WERE BOTH IN LOVE WITH THE SAME GIRL! JOHN WAS RICH... WHILE LARRY JUST MANAGED TO SCRAPE UP ENOUGH TO GET THROUGH COLLEGE...



ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR, LARRY, ISN'T IT?

SURE, JOHNNY BARTER!

AND THEN THAT FATEFUL DAY ARRIVED! THE FRATERNITY THAT JOHN AND LARRY BELONGED TO WAS INVITED TO A GRADUATION DANCE, GIVEN BY MARY ANDERSON'S SOCIETY...



...AND IT'S STRICTLY FORMAL, YOU GUYS! ROBERT DOES WITHOUT A FIOFF!

WHA...?

IT MATTER LARRY? CAN'T YOU AFFORD ONE?

IT WAS A BAD BREAK FOR LARRY! JOHN ~~HAD~~ TUXEDO, AND SO HE WENT TO THAT DANCE... WHILE LARRY STAYED BEHIND...



GARNITT! JUST MY LUCK! JOHNNY'LL PROBABLY MAKE TIME WITH NANCY TONIGHT!

BUT WHEN THE BOYS RETURNED LATE THAT NIGHT...



HEY, LARRY! CONGRATULATE ME! NANCY AND I ARE ENGAGED! WE'RE GOING TO BE MARRIED RIGHT AFTER GRADUATION!

I... I... I SEE!

IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT DAMNED FALLOUT OF YOURS, JOHN BAXTER, NANCY ANDERSON WOULD HAVE BEEN MY WIFE!



BUT...WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT, YOU ASK? LET ME CONTINUE! JOHN AND NANCY WERE MARRIED!

GO AHEAD, LARRY!
KISS THE BRIDE!



NANCY'S FATHER GAVE JOHN A GOOD POSITION IN HIS FIRM, AND JOHN WAS SET...

WHILE IN HIS SMALL OFFICE LARRY STRUGGLED TO MAKE ENDS MEET...

TAKE A LETTER,
MISS BLAIR!

YES, MR.
BAXTER!



DAY IN AND DAY OUT...WAITING FOR THAT PHONE TO RING! WAITING... WAITING! WILL I EVER BE A SUCCESS?



...AND BROODS...

FOR HE IS JOHN'S SHOES TODAY!
FOR HE HAS EVERYTHING THAT
HE HAD...



...AND THEN HE MADE HIS DECISION...

BUT I CAN HAVE NANCY... JOHN'S JOB... MONEY... PRESTIGE! I'LL TAKE THEM FROM HIM! THEY SHOULD BE MINE, ANYWAY! I'LL KILL HIM!



LARRY GREAT PLANNED IT VERY CAREFULLY...EVERY DETAIL! ONE NIGHT, ON A LONELY ROAD...

LARRY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE AT THE HOUSE FOR DINNER! WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

MY CAR BROKE DOWN, JOHN! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO COME ALONG!



IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, LARRY! NANCY WILL BE THRILLED!

YES! SHE'LL PROBABLY GET THE BRIDE OF HER LIFE!



AS HE STRUGGLED JOHN, LARRY GRABBED THE WHEEL AND GUIDED THE CAR TO A STOP! THEN HE DROVE TO A POINT WHERE THE ROAD SKIRTED A MOUNTAINCLIFF...

THIS IS PERFECT!



PROPPING THE UNCONSCIOUS FIGURE OF JOHN BEHIND THE WHEEL, LARRY RELEASED THE BRAKE ON THE CAR AND LET IT ROLL TOWARD THE CLIFF EDGE! THEN...



THEY CALLED IT AN ACCIDENT! LARRY'S PLAN HAD WORKED PERFECTLY! AT THE FUNERAL, HE COMFORTED THE GRIEF-STROCKEN NANCY...

OH, MY NANCY! HE WOULD SOON HAVE WANTED OUT THAT MAN. SOB... SOB...



THE MONTHS PASSED, AND LARRY HENCE CANNOT CARE TO CALL MORE AND MORE OFTEN AT THE HOME OF THE YOUNG WIDOW, NANCY BASTER...

YOU'VE SET YOUR WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF YOU, NANCY! YOU CAN'T THROW IT AWAY!

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, LARRY!



AND THEN... ONE EVENING...

NANCY! YOU KNOW HOW I'VE FELT ABOUT YOU... EVER SINCE COLLEGE!

YOU'RE SWEET, LARRY!





HARRY ME, NANCY! LET
ME TAKE JOHN'S PLACE!
I LOVE YOU!

I'VE
ALWAYS
LIKED
FOO
LARRY...



THEN SAY "YES"...
SAY "YES"!

ALL RIGHT,
LARRY! I'LL
MARRY FOO!



AND SO, LARRY HAD GOTTEN WHAT
HE WANTED! NANCY WAS GOING TO
BE HIS WIFE! IN HIS ROOM, THE
NEXT BEFORE THE WEDDING...

HA-HA! I'VE WON AT LAST, JOHN
BAXTER! I'VE WON AT LAST!



I'VE GOT IT ALL! EVERYTHING I WOULD HAVE
GOTTEN IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT **TUXEDO** YOU HAD
WHEN WE WERE IN COLLEGE! BUT NOW I... E...



YOUR TUXEDO! THAT WOULD CROWN MY VICTORY!
TOMORROW WHEN I MARRY NANCY, I'LL WEAR **FOUR
FOXBROS**... THE ONE THEY BURNED YOU IN!



THE GATES TO THE CEMETERY CREAKED OPEN, AND
LARRY... HIS EYES WIDE AND STIRRED... ENTERED!
HE CARRIED A SPADE...



SLOWLY HE MADE HIS WAY ACROSS THE GRASS...
BETWEEN THE HEADSTONES... UNTIL HE CAME TO THE
ONE MARKED "JOHN BAXTER"...

JUST THIS LAST YEAR, JOHN
BAXTER... AND THEN, TOMORROW
MORNING, MY VICTORY WILL BE
COMPLETE!

AND THAT IS LAWRENCE
CARBY'S STORY... SO PAUP
BUT? HEAR THAT MELLOW
BOOM? THE GORFFIN! LET'S
SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO...



AGH! NOW TO OPEN YOUR
CASKET AND STEAL YOU OF
YOUR LAST POSSESSION.
JOHN BAXTER!



H-H-H-H! FOUR MONTHS IN THE GROUND
HASN'T HARMED IT ANY! IT'S STILL
IN GOOD CONDITION!



LARRY CARBY REMOVED THE FLOTTING FROM THE
CORPSE OF JOHN BAXTER AND RE-COVERED THE
GRAVE! THEN...



...AND NOW FOR SOME SLEEP! TOMORROW
IS A BIG DAY!

YOU THINK HE'S MAD, DON'T YOU WELL, YOU MAY BE RIGHT!
IN ANY CASE, THE NEXT MORNING LARRY DRESSED IN JOHN'S
TUXEDO...



YES, JOHN! IT FITS. FINALLY FIT INTO EVERYTHING
OF YOURS. FINE! AH-HA!

THE CHURCH WAS HOT! AND AS LARRY STOOD IN THE
VESTRY, WAITING FOR THE CEREMONY TO BEGIN...



WHERE! IT'S CERTAINLY HOT IN HERE THIS
MORNING! I... I... FEEL... STRANGE...

SOON THE FAMILIAR STRAINS OF THE WEDDING MARCH
EDGED THROUGH THE VAULTED ROOM...



IT... MUST BE MY... IMAGINATION... BUT I FEEL...
AS THOUGH... THIS... JURY... WERE CONSIDERING ME!

NANCY MADE HER APPEARANCE AND STARTED DOWN THE LONG AISLE...



H. HURRY! I.I. CAN'T BREATHE!
I.I. DON'T...THINK I CAN...LAST
THROUGH...THE...CEREMONY!

LARRY'S BRAIN WAS REELING! EVERYTHING SWAM BEFORE HIM! AS HE STEPPED FORWARD...



CRUSHING...THE LIFE OUT OF
ME...NOT...CAN'T BREATHE?

WE ARE GATHERED
TOGETHER TO
WITNESS THE...

THEM WERE PLANNED, NOW... THEN A DECREE...



...LET HIM SPEAK NOW,
OR FOREVER HOLD
HIS PEACE...

JOHN... HE... HE'S
CRUSHING ME... KILLING
ME! I...!

IN A LAST MAD FIT, BEFORE THE BLACKNESS CLOSED IN, LARRY TOOK JOHN'S TUXEDO FROM HIMSELF...



YAAAAA AAAAH!

LARRY... I NOW
PROCLAIM
YOU...WHAT

THE GROUP THAT HAD COME TO WITNESS THE WEDDING WAS SHOCKED SOMEONE RUSHED FORWARD TO EXAMINE THE PROSTRATE LARRY...



HE... HE'S DEAD? DEAD?

YES! HE WAS DEAD! AFTER A MEDICAL EXAMINATION WAS MADE...

STRANGE! THIS REPORT SAYS THAT LARRY DIED OF POISONING FROM EMBALMING FLUID! BUT HOW DO LARRY EVER COME IN CONTACT WITH THAT?



YES, HENT WE KNOW HOW, DON'T WE, DEAR READER? WHEN LARRY GOT NOT UNDER THE COLLAR, HIS BODY ABSORBED THE EMBALMING FLUID WHICH HAD CONTAMINATED JOHN'S TUXEDO! AND NOW, LARRY REALLY HAS EVERYTHING THAT JOHN HAD! NO NANCY... NO JOB... NO PRESTIGE... NO NOTHING! JUST A BIG, COOL COFFIN IN A BIG, COOL GRAVE!



PAPERCUT^z

PROUDLY PRESENTS THE SHAMELESSLY-STRUGGLING-TO-WIN-FAN-SUPPORT SEVENTH ISSUE OF THE ALL-NEW...

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES.



RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO WILLIAM M. GAINES, AL FELDSTEIN, REED CRANDALL, JOHNNY CRAIG, JACK DAVIS, WILL ELDER, GEORGE EVANS, GRAHAM INGELS, JACK KAMEN, BERNIE KRIGSTEIN, HARVEY KURTZMAN, JOE ORLANOO, GEORGE ROUSSOS, MARIE SEVERIN, AL WILLIAMSON, AND WALLY WOOD.

"IGNOBLE ROT"

FRED VAN LENTE
WRITER

MORT TODO
ARTIST

MORT TODO
LETTERER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

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TERROR



NO. 7
ALL-NEW!

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

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AN ALL-NEW STORY BY
**JOE R. LANSDALE &
JOHN L. LANSDALE**
TEXAS' TOP TERROR WRITERS!

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WELCOME, KIDIES!
IT'S YOUR OL' PAL THE
CRYPT-KEEPER GETTING READY
TO FILM A COUPLE OF VIDEOS
FOR YOU FOOMB. THE
SCARIEST WEBSITE
OF ALL!

MY FIRST FRIGHTFUL FEATURE, STARS A LOU
NAMED LOUIS, WHO COULD'VE BEEN A REAL HOLLYWOOD
MOVIE STAR — THAT IS BEFORE SOMETHING SET IN
THAT I LIKE TO CALL...

IGNOBLE ROOT

THE FRENCH QUARTER
AT NIGHT.

YOUR FAVORITE HUNTING
GROUND, ISN'T IT, LOUIS?

AND YOU'RE IN
DESPERATE
NEED OF PREY.

THE TRAVELER'S CHECKS YOU
STOLE FROM THE PURSE OF
YOUR LAST MARK ARE JUST
ABOUT GONE, SO IT'S HIGH
TIME TO FIND SOME OTHER
DRUNK, LONELY TOURIST...

...ANY WOMAN, REALLY,
WITH MORE MONEY THAN
SELF-ESTEEM...

CAJUN
BAR &
RESTAURANT







...IT GETS WORSE.

AT FIRST YOU WONDER WHAT THESE SLACK-JAWED OUT-OF-TOWNERS' PROBLEM IS...

THEN...

...YOU SEE IT FOR YOURSELF.

GASP!

CHOKES!



WHAT YOU
SEE IS BAD
ENOUGH...

...BUT
IT'S WHAT
YOU **DON'T**
SEE THAT
TERRIFIES
YOU!

YOU DON'T
SEE FOG ON
THE MIRROR
FROM YOUR
BREATH! FOR
NO MATTER
HOW HARD
YOU STRAIN
YOUR LUNGS...



...YOU CANNOT
BREATHE!

NOR IS THERE A
PULSE BENEATH
YOUR WRIST---

---AND THE SKIN IS
COLD AND GLAMMY
TO THE TOUCH---
LIKE RUBBER LEFT
OUTSIDE OVERNIGHT!

THERE'S ONLY ONE POSSIBLE
EXPLANATION, NO MATTER
HOW IMPOSSIBLE IT SEEMS:

I- I'M...

I'M
DEAD!!!



BUT--- SOMEHOW,
SOME WAY---
YOU'RE STILL
MOVING AROUND---

---AND SO THE NAME
COMES TO YOU
INSTANTLY, BURNING
AN INDELIBLE IMPRINT
INTO YOUR BRAIN:

THAT HIDEOUS OLD WITCH-WOMAN.
YOU KNOW SHE--- AND ONLY SHE---
MUST BE RESPONSIBLE.

HER MISTAKE, IF SHE
TRIED TO KILL YOU
FROM AFAR, FOR NOT
FINISHING THE JOB!

BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING TO DRIVE
RIGHT OUT TO HER PATHETIC
SWAMP TRAILER PARK AND BEAT
HER INTO REVERSING WHATEVER
HEX SHE'S---

Q #@#!

DEDE.

YOU ASSUME IT'S PART OF HER
CURSE THAT YOU'VE BECOME SO
CLUMSY ALL OF A SUDDEN---
THAT YOUR MUSCLES DON'T WANT
TO DO WHAT YOU TELL THEM TO.

YOU'RE NO CORONER, OF COURSE. NOR DO YOU REALIZE THAT YOU DIED WHILE NAPPING IN YOUR FLOPHOUSE OVER THREE HOURS AGO.

SO YOU WOULDN'T KNOW THAT WHEN THE HEART STOPS, GRAVITY IMMEDIATELY BEGINS TO PULL THE STAGNANT BLOOD DOWN, INTO THE LOWER PARTS OF THE BODY...

...IN THIS INSTANCE YOUR FACE, DUE TO YOUR SLEEPING POSITION.

THEY CALL THAT REDDISH-BROWN DISCOLORATION LIVOR MORTIS.

AND THE FACT YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR MUSCLES DO WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO?

GET IN THERE...
BLASTED KEYS!!

THAT THEY'RE SO LOOSE, YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE TRYING TO OPERATE A MARIONETTE WITH CUT STRINGS?

THAT WOULD BE "PRIMARY FLACCIDITY." FREED FROM THE BURDEN OF LIFE, ALL YOUR MUSCLES HAVE GONE COMPLETELY LAX.

INCLUDING YOUR BLADDER MUSCLES...HENCE THE LITTLE "ACCIDENT" BACK AT THE BAR.

SKREEEECH



BUT YOU DON'T KNOW
ANY OF THAT.

ALL YOU DO KNOW
IS THAT THIS IS
DEDE'S FAULT.

DEDE'S--- AND
CECILE'S.

CECILE, EVEN MORE INSECURE
THAN SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL.
WHO SAID SHE WAS AN OIL
EXECUTIVE'S DAUGHTER
TAKING A YEAR OFF FROM
BUSINESS SCHOOL AT
TULANE...



...THE
PERFECT
MARK.

IN NO TIME AT ALL, YOU HAD
HER EATING OUT OF THE PALM
OF YOUR HAND.

TASTE
THAT DELICATE
SWEETNESS?

THAT
COMES FROM
WHAT WE CALL
"NOBLE ROT"
IN THE GRAPE...




SHE WANTED YOU TO MEET HER
PARENTS--- A GOOD SIGN.
YOU'D BEEN MARRIED SIX TIMES
BEFORE... ALL UNDER VARIOUS
PSEUDONYMS...

...AND ALWAYS RESULTING IN
DIVORCE SETTLEMENTS HIGHLY
PLEASING TO YOUR WALLET.



BUT THERE'S
NOTHING A
PARASITE
HATES MORE
THAN A HOST
NEEDIER THAN
IT.

Turns out Cecile was lying
about her background—
she was really white trash
from some Cajun dump in the
middle of the bayou...



...COMPLETE WITH A CREEPY
OLD GREAT-AUNT, TANTE
DEDE, A TRAITLISE, OR
WITCH-WOMAN, WHO
CLAIMED SHE HAD THE
POWER TO "STRIKE YOU
DOWN" IF YOU "DISRE-
SPECTED" CECILE.

CECILE DIDN'T
THINK YOU'D WANT
HER IF YOU KNEW
THE TRUTH!



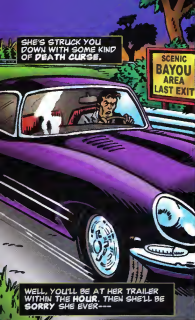
SHE GOT
THAT RIGHT!

VRROARR

REALLY, YOU WERE DOING
HER A FAVOR— SHE'D
FIND OUT YOU HAD NO
INTEREST IN BEING
SOMEBODY ELSE'S MEAL
TICKET EVENTUALLY!



BUT APPARENTLY
OL' TANTE DEDE
DIDN'T SEE IT
THAT WAY...





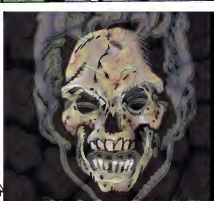


THUD

AND IT LASTS
A WHILE

YOU CAN'T SEE WITH YOUR
EYELIDS CLAMPED SHUT,
BUT YOU CAN FEEL THE
RISING SUN BAKING WHAT'S
LEFT OF YOU.

WAKING THE MICROBES--- *COLSTRIDIUM*
PUTRIFILUM--- THAT HAD BEEN LIVING IN YOUR
FLESH SINCE THE DAY YOU WERE BORN...



...PATIENTLY WAITING FOR YOU
TO DIE SO THEY CAN BEGIN
DEVOURING YOU IN THE
PROCESS OF DECOMPOSITION.



THE BACTERIA AT WORK
GIVE OFF QUITE AN ODOR.



A FRAGRANCE
REPULSIVE TO
MOST...



...BUT IRRESISTIBLE
TO OTHERS.



IT GOES ON FOREVER,
OR SO IT SEEMS.

AND THOUGH YOU
CANNOT MOVE A
MUSCLE, YOU ARE
TOTALLY, HORRIBLY
AWAKE THROUGH
ALL OF IT.

WHEN NOT
SCREAMING IN
SILENT
HORROR...



...YOU FANTASIZE
ABOUT EVERY
CONCEIVABLE WAY
TO KILL A CROW.



YOU DON'T EVEN
EXPRESS ANY GRAT-
ITUDE WHEN THEY
RESTORE YOUR
SIGHT TO YOU.

OF COURSE, BY THE
TIME THAT HAPPENS...

...YOU ARE
QUITE MAD.

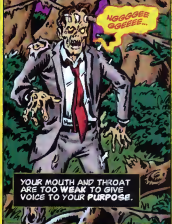


AFTER A DAY OR SO, RIGOR
MORTIS FADES INTO **SECONDARY**
FLACCIDITY.



**SECONDARY FLACCIDITY IS
NOT PRIMARY FLACCIDITY.**

YOUR MOVEMENTS ARE NOT
MUCH MORE THAN A **SHAMBLE**.



NGGGGEE
GGEEEE...

YOUR MOUTH AND THROAT
ARE TOO WEAK TO GIVE
VOICE TO YOUR **PURPOSE**.

BUT IT IS THAT PURPOSE--- IN THE FORM OF
A NAME, BRANDED ONTO WHAT REMAINS OF
YOUR **ROTTING** BRAIN...



...THAT CONTINUES TO
SPUR YOU FORWARD,
LIKE AN **URGENT** RIDER.



YOU WILL LET NOTHING
SLOW YOUR PROGRESS.

YOU KNOW NEITHER
FATIGUE... NOR FEAR.



WOULD-BE
PREDATORS...



...AVOID YOU.

THEY KNOW
SPOILED MEAT
WHEN THEY
SMELL IT.



INSTINCT TELLS YOU WHEN YOU'VE
REACHED YOUR DESTINATION...



...WHICH IS...

...WHERE,
AGAIN?



SO HARD TO
REMEMBER.

THE NOXIOUS FLATULENCE
OF PUTRESCENT GASES
ESCAPING YOUR BLOATED
CORPSE DOES NOT HELP
YOUR CONCENTRATION.






YES, YES, HERE YOU ARE, WHERE YOU WANTED TO BE. THAT MUCH YOU CAN RECALL.

HERE, WHERE YOU WANTED TO... TO DO WHAT?




BLAST! THAT'S THE PART YOU'RE MISSING.

COULD IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT OLD WOMAN?



NO... PROBABLY NOT. YOU'VE NEVER SEEN HER BEFORE IN YOUR 'LIFE.'

INGG
EEEG
GEE...



BEST TO RETURN TO THE SWAMP. THE PRIMORDIAL, ETERNAL STILLNESS OF THE SWAMP.

PERHAPS THERE YOU WILL FIND PEACE.





YOU'RE
GONNA MAKE AN
HONEST
WOMAN OF MY
GRANDNIECE!

AFTER
YOU
ABANDONED
HER



—CECILE
WENT AND DROWNED
HERSELF IN THE
BAYOU!

BUT
YOU AIN'T GONNA
GET OFF THAT
EASY—



—LEAVING HER IN A FAMILY
WAY LIKE THAT!



YOU SWORE YOU'D NEVER BE ANYBODY ELSE'S MEAL TICKET, LOUIS! NOT ANY WOMAN'S— CERTAINLY NOT ANY CHILD'S—

BUT NOW YOU CAN KISS YOUR PRECIOUS FREEDOM GOODBYE! MIGHT AS WELL SHED A TEAR FOR IT AS IT GOES.



AFTER ALL, YOU ALWAYS CRY AT WEDDINGS.

UNFORTUNATELY, BY THIS TIME, CALLIPHORA VICINA, THE BLOW FLY, HAS LAID EGGS IN YOUR TEAR DUCTS.

SO ONLY MAGGOTS COME OUT...







IT WAS A PARE HOME RUN FOR ROSCOE LITTLE. HURLED BY PROFESSION. COWARD BY NATURE.

ROSCOE'S "CUSTOMER" IS ONE DRAGO SAVAGE. AN UPTOWN MAN TAKING A SHORT CUT ON HIS WAY HOME FROM THE BUTCHER SHOP.

PERFECT
SHOT.
WHICH MEANS
HE WON'T
BE NEEDING
HIS GOODS
ANYMORE.



A HOUSE
KEY AND A
WALLET FULL
OF MONEY
JACKPOT





ADDRESS
ON THE LICENSE
PRETTY UPTOWN
DISG. MIGHT BE
WORTH CHECKING
OUT.



LOOKS
LIKE A
PACKAGE
OF MEAT...
MIGHT AS
WELL GO
FOR THE
WHOLE
HOB.



LOOKS DARK...
MAYBE EMPTY.
THAT WOULD BE
GOOD.

ONE
WAY TO
FIND
OUT.

A man wearing a dark cap and a jacket is looking into a room. In the background, there is a staircase and a small table with a lamp. A framed portrait of a woman hangs on the wall.

JACKPOT

TIME
TO CHECK
OUT WHAT'S
GOING TO
THE PAWN
SHOP.

A man in a cap is looking at a bed in a room. The room appears to be a simple, possibly rented, space with a bed and some furniture.

NICE...
AND IF NO
ONE'S HERE,
THIS BED WILL
BEAT SLEEPING
IN AN ALLEY.

A man in a cap is looking at a rack of men's clothes. He is holding a small object, possibly a key or a piece of jewelry, in his hand.

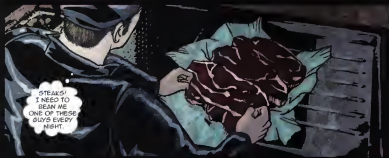
ALL
MEN'S CLOTHES
MUST LIVE ALONE
THIS GETS BETTER
AND BETTER.



TIME
TO FIND THE
KITCHEN,
CHECK OUT
WHAT'S FOR
DINNER



BEATS THE
THROWAWAYS
AT JOE'S
GRILL



STEAKS!
I NEED TO
BEAN ME
ONE OF THESE
GUYS EVERY
NIGHT.



MAN,
THAT SMELLS
GREAT



HHROOOOOO!

GUY
MUST
HAVE A
DOGS

HHROOOOOO!

BUT
I NEVER
HEARD A
DOGS-LIKE
THAT

HHROOOOOOOO!





JUST LIKE
IN THE HORROR
MOVIES, WERE-
WOLVES.



SO
THAT'S WHO
THE STEAKS
WERE FOR.



LATER...

THIS
IS THE LIFE..
EVEN GOT MY
OWN EXOTIC
PETS

THIS IS
8000 ENOUGH
FOR THE LIKES
OF YOU TWO

DUDE
BEATS THE
CHEAP
STUFF

AN EXPENSIVE
WINE HANGOVER
IS A LOT LIKE A
CHEAP WINE
HANGOVER

MORNING
ALREADY.

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO MY WERE-
WOLVES?

THAT
WOULD
BE US.

WHERE'S
DRAGO?



YOU SURE LOOK BETTER
WITHOUT ALL THAT HAIR AND
TEETH, HONEY. AS FOR DRAGO,
HE AIN'T COMING BACK...



OH, NO.
HE WAS OUR
BROTHER, OUR
PROTECTOR.
WHAT WILL
WE DO?



I'M IN
CHARGE NOW
SO, YOU'LL
DO WHAT I
TELL YOU.



HAVE
PITY ON
US

I'LL HAVE
WHATEVER I
WANT, AND THE
FIRST THING I WANT
IS TO KNOW HOW
YOU COME TO
BE THE FREAKS
YOU ARE.



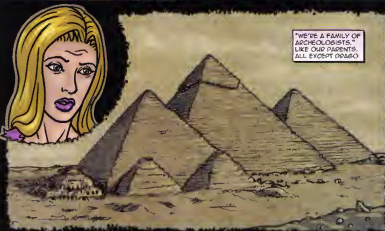
WILL YOU
HELP US
IF WE TELL
YOU?



I MIGHT,
YOU NEVER
KNOW. TELL
ME.



"WE'RE A FAMILY OF
ARCHEOLOGISTS,"
LIKE OUR PARENTS.
ALL EXCEPT ODMSO



"WE DISCOVERED AN UNDISTURBED
TOMB IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS.
A LOCAL TOLD US OF THE PLACE.
HE WOULD ONLY TAKE US THERE
WHEN IT WAS NEAR NIGHT.



IT'S THE
SYMBOL OF
ANUBIS.

MOST
DEFINITELY.



IT'S A CURSE
OF SOME KIND
SAYS ANUBIS WILL
SEND HIS MINIONS
TO AVENGE HIM IF
THE TOMB IS
OPENED

RIDICULOUS,
OF COURSE
OPEN IT.



TO HELL WITH
ARCHAEOLOGY!
WE CAN MAKE A
FORTUNE.

"WE WERE OVERCOME WITH SPEED.



THE
MOON IS UP...
AND YOUR
PATH IS
BLOCKED

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

I AM A
GUARDIAN
OF THIS TOWN.
NOW YOU WILL
BE PUNISHED
FOR YOUR
INVASION.



EEEEEE!



"I WAS BITTEN."



"WE WERE BOTH BITTEN."



"BUT BY ACCIDENT WE FOUND
THE BEAST'S ACHILLE'S HEEL.



"IT WAS SILVER.



"WHEN IT WAS DEAD, WE GAVE
UP ON THE PLACE AND FLEW.



"WHEN WE RETURNED HOME
THE CURSE KICKED IN, AND WE
BECAME AS YOU SAW US."





HOW
COME
YOU'RE
IN THESE
CAGES?

TO KEEP US
SAFE, AND
TO KEEP OTHERS
SAFE. JUST BEFORE
DAYLIGHT, DRAGO
SETS US FREE.

BUT
AT NIGHT
WE STAY
IN THESE
CAGES.



WELL, HE
AIN'T HERE FOR
THAT NOW, IS HE?
I LIKE YOU RIGHT
WHERE YOU
ARE.

AND IF
YOU'RE A GOOD
LITTLE BOY AND
GIRL, I MIGHT JUST
KEEP FEEDING YOU
SCRAPS, OF COURSE.
MIGHT GET YOU
MATCHING FLEA
COLLARS.

HA! HA! HA!

BUT IN THE
MEANTIME, I'M
GOING TO LOOT
THIS JOINT SIX
WAYS FROM
SUNDAY.



ROSCOE MADE A NUMBER OF
TRIPS TO THE PAWNSHOP



LAYAWAY
Up to 6 Months



HE WENT METHODICALLY
FROM ROOM TO ROOM



WHAT'S
HE GO WITH
ALL THESE
BOOKS?







HEY,
THESE
LOOK
LIKE



THEY ARE...
THEY'RE SILVER...
WELL, OLD DRAGO
WASN'T ENTIRELY
TRUSTING OF
GUESSA AND
SIS.



THIS
PLACE
IS ABOUT
WORKED
OUT





NOW,
TO SEE IF
THESE BULLETS
WORK... DON'T
WANT TO
LEAVE ANY
WITNESSES.

EVEN IF
THEY ARE
PART-TIME
WEE-
WOLVES.



RRRR RRRGH!

AND
BEFORE
I LEAVE I'M
GONNA GET
ME ANOTHER
BOTTLE OF
THAT WINE!

LADY
AND GENT,
TIME TO SAY
GOODNIGHT.



BAM!

BAM!





YOU...
HOW...? YOU'RE
DEAD.

THE
CLUB YOU
HIT ME WITH...
MUST HAVE
BEEN HAWK-
THORNE



AND,
YES, I'M
DEAD. I'VE
BEEN DEAD
A LONG
TIME.



SILVER
BULLETS ARE
FOR WERE-
WOLVES



THEY'RE
NOT
FOR...

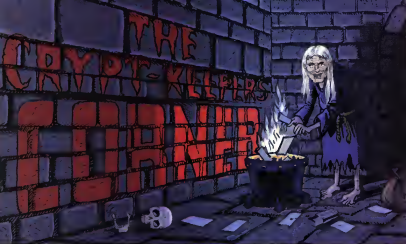
WEEEEEE!



VAMPIRES!

THE END





Greetings, CRETINS! It's me, your digital camera-toting Crypt-Keeper, with another SCARY SELECTION of SPAM from our beloved fans. Looks like our "NEW DIRECTION" toward DARKER, more INTENSE TALES OF TERROR is going over better than expected! Just check out the voting for last issue's favorite TERROR TALE. "A Ripping Good Time" by writers Joe R. Lansdale and John L. Lansdale and illustrated by James Romberger, SOUNDLY SLAUGHTERED "Jumping the Shark" by writer Arie Kaplan and artist Mr. Exes. Just goes to show that even today's frightening TV producers can't compete with ol' Jack the Ripper when it comes to the real FEAR FACTOR!

We're also thrilled to announce that yet a FOURTH FEAR-FILLED collection of TALES FROM THE CRYPT stories from Papercutz will soon be HAUNTING your favorite bookseller's shelves. Available in both paperback and COLLECTOR'S ITEM hardcovers, "TALES FROM THE CRYPT #4: CRYPT-KEEPING IT REAL!" features my never-before-seen YOU TOOMB contributions, "You Toomb" by Stefan Petrucha and Tim Smith 3, "The Creditor" by Alex Simmons and Mori Todd, "Dumped" by Scott Lobdell and Facundo Velilla & Alejandro Cabral, and "Roses Bedight" by Stefan Petrucha and Jeziel Sanchez Martinez. The third VENOMOUS VOLUME, entitled "TALES FROM THE CRYPT #3: ZOMBIELICIOUS!" features "Graveyard Shifts at the Twilight Gardens" by Rob Vollmar and Tim Smith 3, an EXCLUSIVE all-new tale, created just for the graphic novel series!

I could also mention that the first two collected CRYPT volumes ("Ghouls Gone Wild!" and "Can You Fear Me Now?") are both still on sale at better BOOKSTORES everywhere, but then I wouldn't have any room left for your FAWNING FAN-MAIL...

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Cheers to you for bringing TETC horror back to my local comic shop. I've been an EC fan forever and have been reading your new publication since issue #1. Now I gotta say at first I was disappointed with most of the art, yet the stories are actually quite good and I find myself flinching for the next issues. I just finished reading issues #4 and #5. On #4 I really enjoyed "Extra Life," extreme gamer madness is always a plus. It has a great modernized sense of horror writing and I loved the art. Then "Crystal Clear" another great story for the modern horror reader yet the art is just lagging. On issue #5 "Queen of the Vampires" is a good read and the artwork is getting better. "Kid-tested, Mother Approved" shot it down for me. I enjoyed the story but what a lousy cover, it's as if my 5 year-old son drew the art. So here're my questions. Why only two stories per issue? And can't you get a better artist to represent the Crypt Keeper, the Old Witch and the Vault Keeper? I'm sure most will agree they just look silly. Two last questions - I'm on the brink of finishing my own horror comic publication. Any advice on how to make it happen? Or how could I get one of my twisted stories and art in your mag?

A true fan,
Doug Randazzo
Long Island, New York

Bribery usually works, Doug!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I just got a new Tales from the Crypt pinball machine! Attached is a picture of me with my pinball machine. I really like reading your comic because it has lots of evil stories and it's fun to read.

Keep up your evil work!
Gabe (age 9)
US Air Base Ramstein
(Germany)
PSC 2, Box 11587
APO AE 09012



Now Gabe knows how to get on our good side!

Subject: Crypt #6

Recently, I wrote to you guys and expressed my general feelings toward the first five issues of the new TALES FROM THE CRYPT. Generally, I was happy with the series but, being a huge fan of the original comics, I was concerned that the new series may not be grisly enough. Judging by the letter column, I am not the only person that felt this way.

After reading the sixth issue, I would like to commend you on actually listening to the input of your readers. This was definitely the best issue produced thus far and this new (old) direction that you are taking is gradually becoming evident.

That being said, I still have a couple of complaints. I was really enjoying "Jumping the Shark," but the ending is a huge letdown. Seriously, "I'm a return?" That's it? The entire story was leading up to a pun? No gore, no ironic death, nothing! Okay...at least the art is quite good. Mr. Essex is quickly becoming my favorite modern CRYPT artist thus far, as his work on "Queen of the Vampires" is also solid. In a way, "A Ripping Good Time" is the opposite of "Jumping the Shark." I liked the story, but I was not crazy about the art. While the story is your most gruesome thus far (even though I am pretty sure that decapitations typically involve blood), I often had to reread pages in order to understand what the hell was going on. The murky art style made it difficult to understand the progression of the plot and a more traditional style would have greatly benefited the story. However, if you are conducting a poll about this issue, my vote goes to "A Ripping Good Time."

Looking ahead, I eagerly await issue #7, as the cover image leads me to believe that this will be the first issue with actual gore in it. I also noticed that #7 is shipping in July and #8 is shipping in August. Does this mean that CRYPT is going monthly?

Michael
Saddle Brook, NJ

It's not exactly BLOOD, but we are hoping to KETCHUP on our schedule!

Subject: TFTC #6

Congratulations on the sixth issue. It is nice to see that you have made it this far. Everyone in the letters section seems to talk about the art in the comics and that's one area I can applaud you guys for, the art. While it isn't like the older EC comics, it does have its own style and a look all its own. The stories seem to carry that feel that the old issues have, and that's a good thing.

I do, however, have to give some heavy credit for the cover of issue #6. This cover alone looks like a classic TALES FROM THE CRYPT cover and it really gave me that nostalgic feel just looking at it, serious Kudos there.

I have been reading TALES FROM THE CRYPT since I was a kid, obviously from the reprints, and I must say that it is great to see some new material as I am sure that Gaines would be happy also to see his ideas making a return. It's time for VAULT and HAUNT to make their triumphant returns now, just for the record in my opinion.

I'm gonna vote too. I loved "Jumping The Shark" as it was a well-written story with some exceptional looks at the morality of modern television. I did, however, really enjoy the artwork for "A Ripping Good Time." I just wish the story had been a bit more fleshed out. Either way, keep up the good work and I hope to keep seeing you hacking things out to my newsstand.

The Crypt Faithful,
Jason Greene

Maybe we should bring Jack the Ripper back as a TV producer...?

Keep those emails and letters coming - we get so lonely here in the Crypt of Terror! Send letters to:

The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your comments to the Old Editor at:

salicrup@papercutz.com

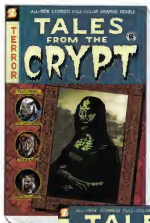
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E.C. FANS!

YOU'VE WRITTEN!
YOU'VE E-MAILED!
YOU'VE PHONED!
YOU'VE THREATENED US!
YOU'VE DEMANDED!
(BUT WE'RE COMING OUT WITH
THESE COLLECTIONS ANYWAY!)



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KURTZMAN, JOE ORLANDO, GEORGE ROUSSOS, MARIE SEVERIN, AL
WILLIAMSON, AND WALLY WOOD.

"BRAIN FOOD"

ROB VOLLMAR
WRITER

TIM SMITH 3
ARTIST

MARK LERER
LETTERER

LAURIE E. SMITH
COLORIST



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

GHOULUNATICS SEQUENCES

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ARTIST/TITLE LETTERER/COLOR

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"MURDER M.A.I.D."

GREG FARSHTEY
WRITER

MR. EXES
ARTIST

MARK LERER
LETTERER

TERRY NANTIER



THE PUBLISHER

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THE OLD EDITOR

Caricatures by Rick Parker.

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THE CRYPT OF TERROR





AND IN THAT
FINAL MOMENT,
I REMEMBER.

REMEMBER HOW
IT BEGAN.



THAT LOOK OF
URGENT FEAR ONLY
HALF-CONCEALED
BY THE PATIENT'S
AWARENESS OF
THE GULF THAT
SEPARATES US.



HE RUNS
HIS TONGUE
NERVOUSLY
ACROSS HIS
DRY LIPS
THREE TIMES...

...BEFORE FINALLY
UTTERING THE
WORDS THAT
CHANGE MY LIFE
FOREVER.

DOC-P



HE FIDGETS WHEN I
LOOK AT HIM DIRECTLY.
THAT'S PROBABLY
THE THORAZINE





THE MOTHER—DEAD NOW TWO YEARS OF CARDIAC FAILURE UNDER MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

THE CATALYST FOR THE PATIENT'S FIRST REFERRAL TO THIS FACILITY AS A CLASSIC SELF-MUTILATOR



ONLY THIS ONE BLAMES HIS BREAKTHROUGH EPISODE ON A SUPERNATURALLY CURSED "FULLY POSEABLE, MICRO-ARTICULATED ACTION FIGURE." WHATEVER THAT MEANS

I ELECT TO ENGAGE HIM.





HOW COMFORTING
IT MUST BE TO
EXPLAIN AWAY ALL
OF LIFE'S ILLS BY
THE EXISTENCE OF
A BRAIN-EATING
MONSTER.



CAN'T HOLD A JOB?
BRAIN-EATING
MONSTER. GLOBAL
WARMING? TRY A
BRAIN-EATING
MONSTER INSTEAD.

YOU HAVE NOTHING
TO WORRY ABOUT,
THOMAS.

I HAVE IT ON
GOOD AUTHORITY
THAT THERE ARE NO
BRAIN-EATING MON-
STERS LOOSE IN
THIS FACILITY.

IF YOU
SAY SO.



LIE BACK AND
TRY TO RELAX.

THEN I'LL LET THE
NURSES KNOW THAT
YOU ARE DUE FOR
YOUR MEDS.

THANKS.



I PUT THE EVENT
IN MY MENTAL
COLUMN OF
VICTORIES.

ANOTHER PATIENT BROUGHT
BACK FROM THE EDGE OF
PSYCHOSIS BY MY WORDS
OF COMFORT AND SOLACE.

AT LEAST I THINK
HE IS UNTIL...





THE BRAIN-EATING MONSTER STRIKES AGAIN!

PERHAPS, IN LIGHT OF WHAT CAME AFTER, I CAN SEE HOW MY RESPONSE TO THE PATIENT'S WARNINGS COULD BE CONSTRUED AS... DISPROPORTIONATE.

THIS WAY, GENTLEMEN, AND ROUGHLY, IF YOU LIKE.

HOT DOS!

OW! THAT SUCKED!

THAT'S GOOD, THOMAS.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO VOCALIZE YOUR MOST VIOLENT IMPULSES.

WHAT VIOLENT IMPULSES?

I JUST DON'T WANT MY BRAIN TO GET EATEN!

TUT, TUT, THOMAS.





TAKE MR. DONALLEY
BACK TO HIS ROOM.
FOUR POINT
RESTRAINT.

AND SEE THAT THE
NURSE STARTS HIM ON THIS
REGIMEN OF EXPERIMENTAL
AND POSSIBLY DANGEROUS
ANTI-PSYCHOTICS
AT ONCE.



BUT WHAT IF THE MURDERS DON'T
END THERE, THUS PROVING THAT
THOMAS ISN'T THE SO-CALLED
"BRAIN-EATER"?



IT BECOMES APPARENT ALMOST IMMEDIATELY THAT THE KEY TO FIGHTING THIS DELUSION IS TO SUBJECT IT TO THE SCIENTIFIC PROCESS.



THERE WILL BE NO MORE OF THIS UNSCIENTIFIC BRAIN-EATER CLAPTRAP.

THIS GENTLEMAN IS THE NEW FACE OF ENCEPHALOPHAGIA!



I CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER WHAT THE OLD ONE LOOKED LIKE...

YOU ARE, OF COURSE, WELL AWARE OF THE CURIOUS STRING OF BRAIN EXTRACTIONS THAT HAVE OCCURRED ON OUR WATCH OF LATE.

WELL, NOW THAT HE BRINGS IT UP...

I GUESS SIX IN A WEEK DOES CONSTITUTE SOME KIND OF PATTERN.

DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE WAS AN OLD FACE OF ENCEPHALOPHAGIA?









OH, I DON'T DISPUTE THAT YOU BELIEVE THAT WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND MIND BUT IMAGINE IF YOU WERE EXPERIENCING A COMPLETE PSYCHOTIC BREAK WHERE YOU ARE ABLE TO ACT OUT YOUR MOST UNTHINKABLE IMPULSES WITH NO FEAR OF RECALL AFTERWARDS.



I'LL BE FAMOUS!

YOU'LL BE FAMOUS!

I WILL?



DOCTORS WILL WANT TO COME FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO STUDY YOUR UNIQUE CASE.



WOW, WILL THEIR HANDS LEAVE COOL LIGHT TRAILS IN THE AIR LIKE YOURS DO?

THE MEDIA INSTITUTE WILL BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH THE MOST CUTTING EDGE RESEARCH INTO THE EXTREMITIES OF THE HUMAN PSYCHE!



BUT BEFORE ANY OF THAT CAN HAPPEN, YOU AND I HAVE VITAL WORK THAT MUST BE DONE!

IT'S A GOOD THING THAT THERE'S SO MANY OF YOU...

DOCTOR ANDERS!! COME QUICK!!



SOME PATIENTS
WILL BE LOST
AND SOME WILL
BE SAVED. THAT'S
THE CURRENCY
OF FAILURE WHEN
YOU ARE
A DOCTOR.



BUT WHAT MEANING
ARE WE TO TAKE...

...WHEN IT IS
THE DOCTORS
WHO ARE LOST?

I D-DON'T
UNDERSTAND.



JUST
LIKE BEFORE,
DOC.

NOT A BRAIN
TO PIECE TOGETHER
BETWEEN THEM.



SUCH
BRILLIANT
MINDS.

REDUCED
TO WHAT?

FOOD?

LOOK, DOC, WE'VE
ALREADY CALLED THE
COPS AND THEY ARE ON
THEIR WAY. BETTER THAT
YOU JUST GO LIE
DOWN UNTIL THEY
GET HERE.



FOR ONE MOMENT, I
CONSIDER FOLLOWING
HIS ADVICE. MAYBE I
SHOULD LIE DOWN

HAVEN'T I BEEN
UNDER A LOT
OF STRESS
LATELY? I CAN'T
REMEMBER.



THEN I
REALIZE...

THAT'S JUST
WHAT IT WANTS
ME TO DO. THINK
RATIONALLY.

LAY DOWN
CLOSE MY
EYES AND
WAIT.



AND SO, INSTEAD, I DO SOMETHING
ELSE. SOMETHING CRAZY.

THOMAS?
IT'S ME, DOCTOR
ANDERS. WAKE
UP!

HUH?





IF EVER YOU FIND YOURSELF IN
THE WILDERNESS WITH A FRIEND...

WHERE'RE
WE GOIN'?

JUST TRY
TO FOCUS ON
STAYING AWAKE. I'M
TAKING YOU OUT OF
THIS FACILITY ON MY
AUTHORITY.

AND YOU JUST SO HAPPEN TO
FIND YOURSELVES CONFRONTED
BY A GRIZZLY BEAR...

I DON'T
FEEL SO
GOOD.

JUST A FEW
MORE YARDS,
THOMAS.

JUST REMEMBER...

THE
EMERGENCY
LOCKS HAVE
ENGAGED!

WHICH
KEY?

THE FOOTRACE
ISN'T BETWEEN
YOU AND THE
BEAR...

UH,
DOC?







MEET THE EX-
WIFE, EMERSON
SALE. HER VISIT
TO HER FORMER
HUSBAND'S
HOUSE IS NOT
A SOCIAL ONE.

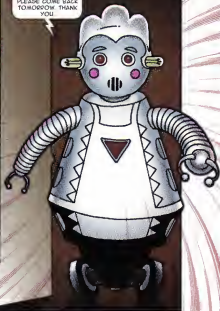
COME
ON, OPEN THE
DOOR, YOU--

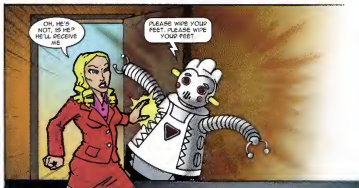
**BING
BONG**

CREAK

WELL, IT'S
ABOUT TIME,
EMERSON!

DR. SALE IS NOT
RECEIVING VISITORS.
PLEASE COME BACK
TOMORROW. THANK
YOU.





M.A.I.D? DON'T TELL ME
ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR
STUPID INVENTIONS?

M.A.I.D. MULTIFUNCTIONAL
AUTOMATED IMMACULATE
DISPOSAL UNIT. HOW MAY
I ASSIST YOU?

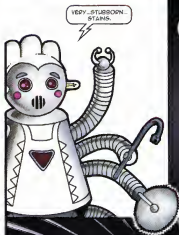
GUTE COULDN'T
FIND A REAL
WOMAN TO CLEAN
YOUR HOUSE FOR
YOU, HUH?

I DON'T
HAVE TIME TO
DEAL WITH PEOPLE—
TO ANSWER THEIR QUES-
TIONS, LISTEN TO THEIR
COMPLAINTS, OR PICK UP
THEIR MESS. THIS
NEW M.A.I.D DOES
ALL THAT FOR ME.
WATCH.

M.A.I.D
DEPLOY

YES,
DOCTOR.

YOU SEE? EVERYTHING A
MODERN MAINTENANCE
ROBOT NEEDS, ALL IN
ONE UNIT.





CRASH!

YOU HAVE MADE A MESS. ACTIVATING
CLEANSING AND
DISPOSAL PROGRAM.



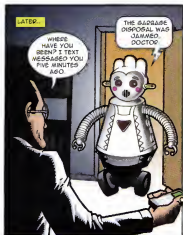
THIS ISN'T
OVER! YOU'LL BE
HEARING FROM MY
LAWYER!

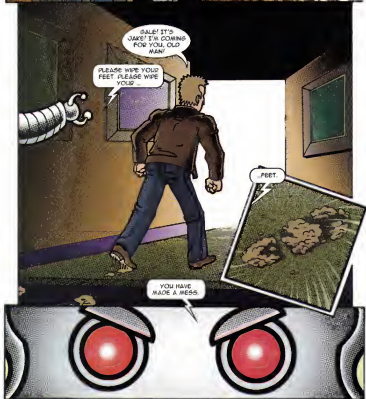
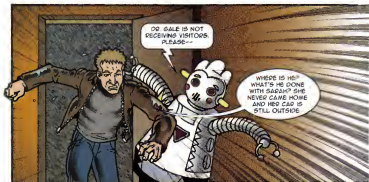
PROGRAM ACTIVATED
COMMAND RECEIVED.
ASSIST GUEST TO
DEPART.

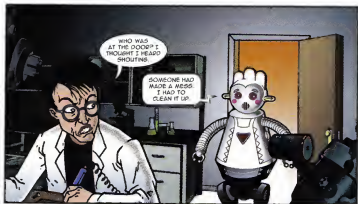


WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?
STOP FOLLOWING
ME, YOU PIECE
OF JUNK!

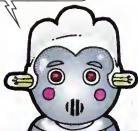
YOU HAVE
MADE A MESS.
MRS. GALE
MESSSES MUST
BE DISPOSED
OF.



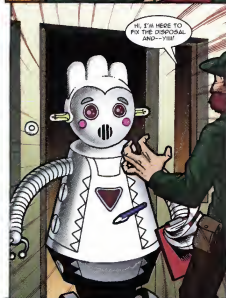




MESS SPEEDS DISORDER.
DISORDER SPEEDS INEFFICIENCY.
INEFFICIENCY IS THE ENEMY OF
RATIONAL THOUGHT.



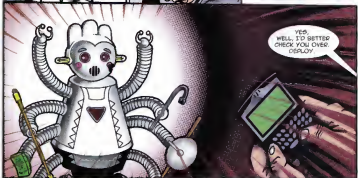
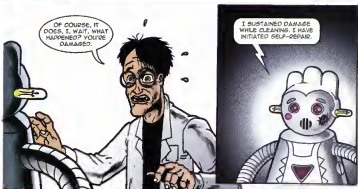


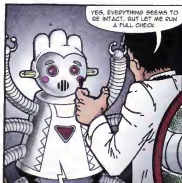






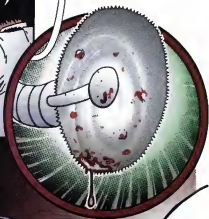






YES, EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE INTACT, BUT LET ME RUN A FULL CHECK.

YES, YES, FINE, I... WHAT IS THAT? IT LOOKS LIKE... BLOOD.



I AM IN WORKING ORDER. MESSSES WILL BE ELIMINATED. DISRUPTION FROM NEIGHBORS WILL BE ENDED.

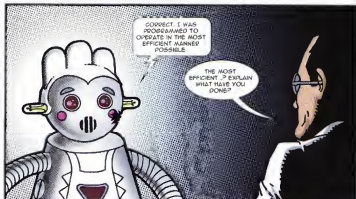


...WHY IS THERE BLOOD ON YOUR SAW TOOL?

I HAVE BEEN CARRYING OUT MY PROGRAMMING.

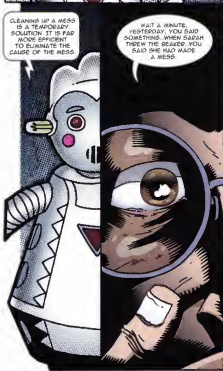


YOU WERE PROGRAMMED TO ANSWER THE DOOR AND THE PHONE... TO GET THE MAIL... TO CLEAN UP ANY MESSSES IN THE HOUSE... THAT'S ALL.



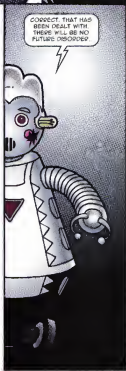
CORRECT. I WAS
PROGRAMMED TO
OPERATE IN THE MOST
EFFICIENT MANNER
POSSIBLE.

THE MOST
EFFICIENT. I EXPLAIN
WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE?

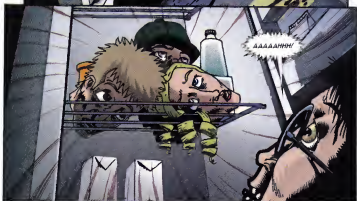


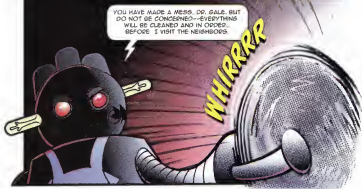
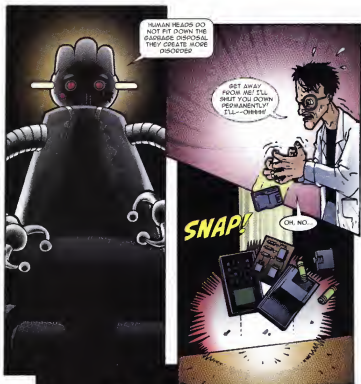
CLEANING UP A MESS
IS A TEMPORARY
SOLUTION. IT IS FAR
MORE EFFICIENT
TO ELIMINATE THE
CAUSE OF THE MESS.

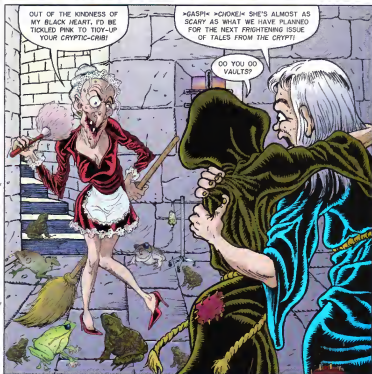
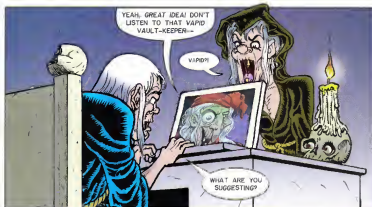
WAIT A MINUTE.
YESTERDAY, YOU SAID
SOMETHING. WHEN SARAH
THREW THE BEAKER, YOU
SAID SHE HAD MADE
A MESS.



CORRECT. THAT HAS
BEEN DEALT WITH.
THERE WILL BE NO
FUTURE DISORDER.







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Gahan Wilson

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Who knew **THE OLD WITCH** was so jealous of **TALES FROM THE CRYPT**'s successful return to NIGHTMARISH NEWSSTANDS and CREEPY COMICBOOK STORES? But what kind of CRYPT-KEEPER would I be if I couldn't deal with ENVIOUS EC-CENTRICS? As if REAL-LIFE wasn't SCARY enough, it seems all you BOILS and GHOULS still enjoy my unique style of SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES! Even tired ol' TIME MAGAZINE featured the cover **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** #8 in a recent issue! Though they missed the REAL STORY – that **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** is back, baby!

But with all that MEDIA FRENZY behind us, we've managed to count up all the votes for your favorite FEAR-Y TALE from **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** #8. The winner is "She Who Would Rule the World," Christian Zamer's ULTIMATE ADAPTATION of Stanley G. Weinbaum's classic sci-fi short story "The Adaptive Ultimate." The race was as tight as the Vault-Keeper's grip on INSANITY, with Joe R. Lansdale and John L. Lamolele's "Virtual Hoo-doo," illustrated by James Romberger and Marguerite Van Cook coming in a close second.

As for last issue's contest, it seems that some of you LAME-BRAINED LUDDITES may have had trouble finding our new online poll – there weren't nearly as many voters as we expected! What's wrong, kiddies? Don't you realize that VOTING is not only a right, but your PATRIOTIC DUTY? How else will we determine exactly what kind of TERROR-TALES to present on our not-so-pulpy page? Be that as it may, John L. Lansdale, James Romberger and Marguerite Van Cook's "Chicken Man," the scariest story featuring hens and routers this side of TROMA's POULTRYGEIST, won top honors over Fred Van Lente and Ryan Dunlavey's

"Glass Heads." Poor Ryan will just have to settle for having his AWFUL ARTWORK being on display at New York City's MUSEUM OF COMIC AND CARTOON ART (www.mocartny.org), while his PARTNER-IN-SLIME consoles himself scripting MARVEL ZOMBIES 3, from that company that once was known as ATLAS!

Now, I can understand the Vault-Keeper not being able to find our poll – he can hardly find his way back to his VAULT OF HORROR – but the rest of you fan-addicts?! Just go to www.papercutz.com, find the **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** section – don't be scared off by that terrifying GHOUL DETECTIVE, NANCY DROOL or those BRAINLESS BIONICKLESANDDIMES – and click on this issue's cover to vote for your favorite story from this issue! See, it's EC!

Don't forget, if you ever miss an issue (Gawwies forbid!) of **TALES FROM THE CRYPT**, you can still find the stories collected in paperback and hardcover collections wherever books are sold! There's even a boxed set ON SALE NOW collecting paperback volumes #1 ("Ghouls Gonna Wild"), #2 ("Can You Fear Me Now?"), #3 ("Zombielicious"), and #4 ("Crypt-Keeping It Real")! So, you see, thanks to our GREEDY PUBLISHERS, you're never without access to all our CRYPT-Y BADNESS!

And speaking of BADNESS, time to hear what our FIENDISH FANS have to say . . .

Dear The Crypt-Keeper, The Old Witch and The Vault-Keeper:

I must say that these two stories in **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** #8 really gave me some shivers this

evening. "She Who Would Rule the World" is a story of two doctors that thought they were going to win the Nobel Peace Prize for achieving a magnificent healing process on a human subject. Apep Nephthys who was lying on her death bed, inflicted with AIDS, becomes a gorgeous woman that is invincible. Her genetic makeup continues and she thinks she has the ultimate power of doing anything and everything she wishes. She had no conscience and commits a random act of murder, just because she can. She becomes Homo Superior. I can only wonder how she would have continued to evolve, if it was not for the good doctors ending it all in a grand finale. Great story, it had me going. Whew!

Then "Virtual Hoodoo" was somewhat grisly to say the least, especially when that poor guy was bludgeoned to death with a bowl and spoon. Yep, it turned out to be a nice neighborhood without Sidney, a neighborhood filled with monsters! Since I am a ghosthunter, I enjoy these kind of comicbooks. I recently was told by Cartoon Network that I am on a short list as a technical consultant for a pilot called "Afterschool Paranormal" that is produced by two producers from Sci Fi Channel's Destination Truth. I am also flying to the Mayan pyramids for Showtime - Penn & Teller Show, to investigate the Mayan prophesy of 2012. As you can see everyone loves horror, everyone loves the paranormal. That is why I will be taking a few of my TALES FROM THE CRYPT comics to Mexico with me. Love ya guys!

Paul Dale Roberts
General Manager/Paranormal Investigator

A ghosthunter, eh? You may want to check out the Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art! No, not for Dunlavy's exhibit, scary as that may be! They've also got an exhibit devoted to Harvey Comics, home to >gasp< >choker< CASPER, THE FRIENDLY GHOST! See 'em, PDR!

Subject: TALES FROM THE CRYPT

This stuff is great. I remember reading reprints of the originals back in the '80's, so as a 35 year-old reader that came across this new series, I absolutely love it. I just love the tales and I can't get enough. I finish each book thirsting for more. I just read #1 and #2 and have read about your plans for CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED, which I think is great. Keep up the good work!

A fan,
Steven Orris

Thanks, Steve! As for CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED, you won't find too many of those lurking in the CRYPT OF TERROR, but we're making a couple of exceptions for CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED DELUXE #3 -- "FRANKENSTEIN" and CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED

#4 - "THE RAVEN AND OTHER POEMS." Marion Mousse's all-new adaptation of Mary Shelley's original novel is a MODERN MONSTERPIECE! Already HORROR FANS are comparing Mysterious Mousse's dark drawing style to Hellboy's Mike Mignola, and the storytelling to that of the Spirit's Will Eisner. I'm no expert on comicbook art, but as a CRYPT-KEEPER, I know GHOULISHLY GRUESOME when I see it! And if I ever had to be caught UNDEAD with a book of poetry, it better be by Edgar Allan Poe! Of course, the MACABRE illustrations by GHASTLY GAHAN WILSON add just the right SENSE OF DREAD! Who says the Crypt-Keeper isn't well-read, or well, DEAD!

Subject: YOUR NEW MAG

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Just wanted to drop a line to tell you what a wonderful idea you had reviving TALES FROM THE CRYPT. I especially love the Crypt-Keeper, Vault-Keeper and the Old Witch. They are some old friends that I missed dearly and I sure am glad they're back from the dead. I love the new mag (although some of the artwork is simply ghastly), and I just wanted to say how happy I am that you don't have any advertising breaking up the stories. I hate that so much I could kill someone. Keep up the gory work!

Gruesomely yours,
Raelayna Alvarez

And it's great to be back from the DEAD - again! Fear not, Raelayna, your BLOODLUST won't be triggered by any disruptively ABYSMAL ADVERTISING in TALES FROM THE CRYPT! That's 'cause we sneak all our APPALLING ADS in this letter column! And speaking of which...

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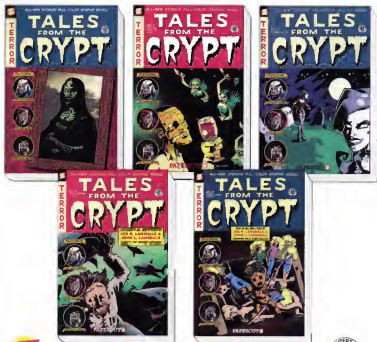
So, until our next issue, keep those emails and letters coming - we've gotta fill these pages somehow! Send letters to:

The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
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Or email your comments to the Old Editor at:
salicrup@papercutz.com

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